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Old-style CIA is our real enemy

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THE MOOD of the CIA, according to David Broder, is "let the good times roll." The Reagan-Haig world view calls for resurgent counter-insurgency, for a CIA that not only snoops but meddles, not only detects but destabilizes.

Yet a new CIA cannot simply be the old one. In order to restore its powers, we must ignore its past crimes and errors by an act of willful blindness. And those who will not submit to this self-blinding are bound to be called unpatriotic. Thus, the price of the new CIA activism

will be a new McCarthyism. The "Red scare" has always flourished only when it had foreign and domestic components. The attacks on the Institute for Policy Studies, the call for new anti-subversive committees, are necessary adjuncts to the rehabilitation of our CIA hit teams.

FOR McCARTHYITES, the true enemy is always at home. The shah of Iran would not have fallen, we are assured, if the CIA had not been weakened. And the CIA would not have been weakened but for breast-beating on the home front about its former crimes. And the atmosphere that fostered that domestic lacrimosity is a "softness" on the Red threat everywhere. So the real enemy is in our midst, disarming us to foes abroad.

Commit that line of reasoning to heart: You are going to hear it used over and over in the coming months. If you agree with it, you will prosper, at least briefly, by denunciation of your fellow citizens. If you disagree, there may be hard times ahead for you.

THE PROBLEM with this reasoning is that it is solipsistic. Only America really exists in its framework. Americans can do anything, so if the shah is overthrown, that is not because he was unpopular, repressive or imprudent. America called the tune; so his failure can only reflect our prior failure to keep propping him up by covert CIA activity. Never mind that our coup violated international law, basic morality and the long-term interests of the Iranians. Who are the Iranians to have any say in their own affairs?

Jimmy Carter has been criticized for excessive moralizing. But he took a proudly amoral stance on Iran — that we had nothing to apologize for in our dealings with that country. Yet the Church committee gave us chapter and verse on all that we had done wrong there. Carter's problem was that he would not do wrong, just protect it. He was neither moral nor amoral, but both at once. When people say of Reagan's regime that we shall at least know where it stands, they suggest that he will not only do wrong but defend wrong; and "get" those who call the wrong things wrong.